

November 8, 2007

Contact: Jacob Roche 202.225.4031

WASHINGTON, DC- U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon today announced that Jefferson Parish will receive \$6,339,622 in grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

"Buying a first home is a wonderful event for many families. Home ownership is good for them; it's good for local industries; and it's good for communities," said Melancon. "For years, the Jefferson Parish Community Development Department has been helping many of our residents-particularly those of low and moderate incomes-buy and take care of their first homes. These HUD grants will enable the JPCDD to continue these valuable services."

The following grants were announced today for Jefferson Parish:

- \$3,735,759 for the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) program (Jefferson Parish). The CDBG program develops stronger communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment. The Jefferson Parish Community Development Department will use this grant to improve public facilities and provide public services. The improvements include water facilities upgrades in city of Westwego and the reinforcement of two major canals, which failed during Katrina, on the east and west side of Gretna. Part of the grant will be used to repair a community center and to replace another, which were damaged by the hurricane. The public services include funds for various homeless programs run by Catholic Charities, Resources for Human Development, and members of the Alliance for the Homeless in Jefferson Parish. The grant will also fund housing counseling and home ownership training through the Jefferson Community Action Department, provide memberships at a new YMCA for low-income residents, and enable Volunteers of America's Repairs on Wheels program to give practical assistance to older citizens in the Parish who need to repair their homes.

- \$2,297,737 for the HOME program (Jefferson Parish). HOME is the largest federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households. The Jefferson Parish Community Development Department is a member of a HOME consortium with St. Charles Parish and city of Kenner. Part of this grant will go toward a replacement housing program to demolish and rebuild houses that are too

damaged to repair.

- **\$41,027 for the American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) (Jefferson Parish).** ADDI, part of the HOME program, aims to increase home ownership, especially among lower income and minority households, and to revitalize and stabilize communities. The Jefferson Parish Community Development Department will use this grant to help low-income, first-time homebuyers with the biggest hurdle to homeownership: down payment and closing costs.

- **\$160,059 for the Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) program (Jefferson Parish).** The ESG program provides homeless persons with basic shelter and essential supportive services. This grant will go towards operational costs of the Jefferson Family Care Center homeless shelter in Marrero.

- **\$105,040 for the Housing Choice Voucher-Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program (Jefferson Parish Housing Authority)**. FSS provides funding to the Public Housing Authority to pay the salary of FSS Program Coordinators and Homeownership Program Coordinators who link program participants to training and supportive services necessary to achieve economic independence and self sufficiency.

###